

# Blood Stained Petals

by Mayonayys

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Summary: Sakurax? - AU: See A/N - T for now. Sakura is in a world where her decisions mean so much. She is made to make a choice between the people she cares for or the fate of the world. While finding out more about herself, she will discover people are not always what they seem. They say the line between good and evil is blurred, but it just depends on which side you stand on. ISO beta

## 1. Chapter 1

**\*\*Quick Authors note here pertaining to the AU that this is set in!\*\***

This story will take place roughly seven years after the original Naurto series ended. Naruto returned, as he did in Shippuden, but many things have not happened in this AU. Without spoiling too much, just know that the Akatsuki had gone into remission, and this also has something to do with Sasuke and why the new team 7 has not found out anything about him. I might write a short piece explaining more of the detail later on, I just don't know what to and to not give away at this point.

>I am a slave to my dear Sakura, so she is the focal point of this story. I'm really going to try and make this as balanced as i can with the action and the romance, and im going to try my best to not rush into anything, but at the same time i dont want it to be too slow.<br>As far as pairing, I'm not entirely certain yet. I think it will be an Akatsuki member, but im not 100% sure.  
>And without further ado, enjoy!<p>

\* \* \*

><p><span><strong>Chapter One<strong>

The day started out like any other for the young Sakura Haruno, she awoke a bit late, rushed to get ready, and sprinted off towards the

hospital. The pink haired ninja usually walked with a bounce in her step and a smile on her face, and today was no different. She greeted all the staff as she passed them on the way up to her office.

Life had treated Sakura quite well, or so she thought. It seemed that nothing would ever be right when Sasuke left them and then Naruto went off to train, but a determined Sakura had other plans for her life. What was the point of living if your world would just fall apart when the men in your life left you? This was Sakura's exact reasoning as to why she should become the best ninja she could be. To live by ones own accord instead of that of her male partners.

Lucky for her, the great Tsunade took the young woman in. Under this amazing healer, and fighters, watchful eye, Sakura bloomed into the beautiful kunoichi she was today.

Once finally reaching her office, Sakura sat in her big comfy chair with a sigh. She climbed the ranks of this hospital quickly, and was now just a few spots away from the top. The perk of her position was, of course, having her own, real, office, but there was little other than that. Of course there was better pay, but she earned that, it wasn't like it was just some privilege.

Soon after sitting down, Shizune knocked on the door and made her way into the office without waiting for an answer.

"Oh, Sakura-chan~" the woman's voice rang as she pushed her way in with a stack of papers. It wasn't totally unusual for Shizune to be cheery, but unusual enough for Sakura to raise a pink brow at the woman. Upon seeing the woman's expression, and placing the papers down, Shizune gave the pink haired woman a large grin.

"Tsunade-sama awoke without a hangover this morning." The short haired woman giggled, earning a surprised look from Sakura.

"Well," Sakura started, taking in a deep breath, "that would be something to celebrate, but now it seems she's in the right mind to pawn off all her paper work on me." Although slightly annoyed, Sakura ended with a light smile and a small giggle.

Sakura's thoughts drifted to her sensei, she wasn't doing so well anymore, and this worried her.

Tsunade had stepped down from her position as Hokage, despite her jutsus, her age, and habits, we're catching up to her. She was a great Hokage, but with the way things were going outside of the village, they needed a more level headed Hokage to take the chair. That is when Kakashi was picked to be Hokage, yet another of Sakura sensei's took the seat as the most, politically, powerful ninja in the village, and Sakura was proud to have been so lucky to be their students.

Another giggle brought Sakura back to reality, and the stack of papers on her desk.

"Well, good luck Sakura-chan!" Shizune ducked out of the office before Sakura could even respond.

Sakura just sighed as she stared down the work ahead of her. Paperwork was definitely a down side to her position. She was pretty

sure she had done more paperwork than she has ever even healed people. Which someone not in her position might consider a good thing, but it was frustrating.

Another sigh escaped the woman's lips as she got on with another usual day.

A white haired man sat at a large desk with her hands folded in front of his face. One deep black eye peered out at the three ninja who knelt before him. The trio had just appeared at his office door, just after a carrier pigeon showed with some bad news.

The blond of the three was the first to rise.

Naruto Uzumaki. The famous ninja had been sore about his sensei getting the seat of Hokage instead of him, but that anger and jealousy quickly faded as he saw how capable his teacher truly was.

The blue-eyed ninja's brows were set in a way that showed his anger and frustration. "Kakashi-sensei," he wasn't supposed to refer to his former teacher as so, but since when did anyone stop this particular knucklehead from doing as he pleased. The blond took a step toward the Hokage's large desk, letting out a deep breath before he began to speak again.

"Our suspicions have been confirmed."

Kakashi's hands clenched in front of him, knuckles turning white at the news. The Kage let out a deep breath that he was unaware he was holding, gesturing for the ninja in front of him to continue.

"On our way back..." Naruto trailed off, glancing back at his team, with first clenched so tight his nails dug into his skin. "We encountered some of them."

With Naruto's words, Kakashi's gaze traveled to the other two ninja before him. Shikamaru Nara and Kiba Inuzuka, minus his faithful companion. One of the two had a very serious looking wound on his right arm. The Kage was unsure how he could have missed it before, along with their labored breathing, he blamed the stress of his position.

An unsettling silence settled over the room as the wheels turned in Kakashi's head. The last he had heard of this threat was well before he took his seat as the leader of the Leaf Village. For them to be back now was more than just unfortunate. They were no doubt more powerful than before, and to be spotted now must mean they are ready to launch whatever plans they have been plotting.

Releasing his clenched fist, the Kage finally spoke up. "Nara, take Inuzuka to the hospital," he nodded to the pair, who stood and bowed. Gritting his teeth behind his famous mask, he stood, moving his gaze to Naruto, "You come with me to speak with the council."

Boring was a lackluster term Sakura often used to describe her work. In reality, it was much more than the simple word could ever convey. The pinkette sighed, dropping her pen on her desk as she stretched her aching muscles. She had been doing nothing but paperwork for the last three hours and the young woman was hoping for anything to

spice up her work day, this wish being something she would soon regret.

The light pitter patter of feet could be heard headed down the corridor, peaking Sakura's interest. Running through a hospital was normal, of course, but there were no patients or operating rooms on this floor. The woman instinctively stood from her chair, arching a brow as her slightly ajar door was pushed fully open.

A trainee stood in the door way, panting slightly, one that Sakura recognized. She had tasked this particular person with alerting her if any of her close comrades ever visited the hospital for other than a personal call.

To Sakura's dismay, the young woman just stood in her door way, too busy catching her breath to even speak. Growing frustrated, Sakura rose her voice, "Moto, speak." Her voice was heavy, there hadn't been much trouble in the village for a very, very, long time. Everything had been peaceful, meaning the only people that visited the hospital were civilians, and Sakura had no civilian friends.

The woman in the doorway let out a small 'meep' before speaking up, "Nara-san and Inuzuka-san are here." She spoke hastily, and quickly moved out of the door way and bowed as Sakura raced out of the room.

While not Sakura's closest friends, the two men had become good companions to the woman over the years. And the last she had heard of the two, they were on a mission with Naruto. If they were hurt enough to come to the hospital with Naruto around, it must be serious.

She hastily made her way down flights of stairs and to the emergency ward, her eyes scanning the room of ailing civilians and landing on her friends surrounded by a few nurses and a doctor. Quickly, Sakura made her way over to the group, seeing Kiba laying in the bed, arm mangled. Thankfully the messy bandages kept enough blood in for him to make it this far.

While Sakura trusted her colleagues, this was a different situation, she pushed the attending doctor aside and placed a, now glowing, palm over the arm. Pressing her chakra into the wound, she could see just how bad the injury was. Not only was muscle and tendon shredded to bits, but the bone was also crushed in several places, fragments lodged into the surrounding tissue. She quickly raised her head, eyes landing on Shikamaru, who stooped on the other side of the bed.

"What in the world happened to him?"

"The Akatsuki are back."

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN:\*\* Well, well! We have a peak into our heroines normal day, and a little insight into the way things are. And then! \*gasp\* We have the big bad introduced.

What are the Akatsuki up to in this Alternate Timeline?!

>What will our hero's do in the wake of an old danger rising again?!<br>Find out next time on Blood Stained Petals!

\*cough\* im sorry im a corny nerd. Please R&R, ngl praise or criticism is what keeps me writing!  
>(Also in search of a beta HMU!)<p>

## 2. Chapter 2

**\*\*Mayonayys here!\*\***

>So you guys actually seem to like this, or thats what im gathering! The few followfavs this has already makes me swoon!

>I'm really excited to finally be writing something that both myself and readers enjoy!<br>This is looking to be a really big/long story and im going to try and put out as many chapters as i can, and make them as long as i can.

>If i ever stop writing for a while, please see my profile for updates on why!<br>**\*\*Here we go!**

><strong>

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Chapter 2<strong>

Kiba had been taken up to surgery soon after Sakura arrived to see the pair in the ER. Hospital guidelines prohibited Doctors with deep bonds to patients from doing surgery on them, which is why Sakura Haruno was not marching her way to the Hokage tower to find out more about the situation at hand, and what was happening with Naruto. She would have normally argued and said she was the best for the job, which she was, but knew her colleagues could handle it, as it was not really life or death at the moment.

As soon as she entered the front door of the tower she could tell things were not going so well. It was normal for the employees of the building to be going about the tower in a hurry, but never so frantically. As she approached the front desk, the receptionist stood and bowed to Sakura, speaking before Sakura could question her about Kakashi or Naruto's whereabouts. "I'm sorry Haruno-san, but the Rokudaime and Uzumaki-san are meeting with the council at the moment." This woman wasn't unfamiliar with Sakura, she had been the receptionist here for years now. Sakura's face was very familiar to the people of this building, being the apprentice of one Hokage, and a former student of the next, meant visiting the building more often than any normal ninja would.

The woman's head was still bowed as Sakura let out a deep sigh, rubbing her temples, something she picked up from the former Hokage. "Well, Koguchi-chan, do you think i could just wait in Kakashi-sensei's office for the time being? How long have they been meeting with the council?" Unconsciously, the pinkette crossed her arms and tapped her foot on the floor lightly in frustration. Sure, she was a well known and respected ninja in the village, but not amount of fame or respect could allow a regular ninja to interrupt a council meeting.

"Ah," the receptionist started, raising her head and scratching her cheek lightly. She didn't wish to offend neither their Hokage, nor the hot-tempered medic in front of her, so the question she was asked was not the easiest. Kakashi was actually rather picky about who was just let into his office without his permission, but would there be an exception for his students? This was not a situation she had been

in before, but the stern look of the ninja in front of her got her to for an answer quickly. "Y-yes, Haurno-san!" she bowed again, raising to answer Sakura's second question. "The meeting started almost an hour ago, I think," she placed a finger on her chin, thinking. "I'm not sure of the context, but I don't suppose it should go much longer." She ended and gave Sakura a light smile, who only nodded quickly to her before heading to the top of the tower.

Once reaching the office door, she made her way in, taking a seat in a chair by one of the many large windows in the office, peering out over the large village. A relaxed sigh escaped Sakura's lips. This village and its people were her everything. The presence of the Akatsuki challenged the safety of those she loved and cared about, and just their mention was enough to make her blood boil.

The last they had heard of the organization had been about a year after Naurto's return. The new Team 7 often went out on searches for their old comrade whenever they got word of Orochimaru or the Akatsuki. Only once did they encounter the ebony haired man, and she supposes it was the last time she had ever felt more than a bond of friendship to the man. He had become everything he had hated when he was younger. What they found that day still sent shivers down Sakura's spine. The power the Uchiha had wanted was certainly in his hands. She would never forget stumbling in the massacre of one of Orochimaru's bases. They were still not sure of the details, and maybe they never would be, but Sasuke had betrayed his leader, slaughtering every minion and test subject of the twisted snake man. They had caught up to him just as he was leaving the underground base, covered in the blood of his former allies, with his swirling red eyes piercing them. He was accompanied by a figure in an Akatsuki cloak, they never caught his face, but Naruto had sworn it was the other Uchiha survivor.

These thoughts gave Sakura goosebumps all over her body, and she rubbed her arms vigorously to make them disappear. Seeing the man she once loved betray the people he sided with once again made her see truly what sort of man he was. He had started off wanting revenge, but it was clear to see that he longed for power for other reasons. Now, in her eyes, he was just as sick and twisted as his older brother.

Sakura's thoughts of her former love were interrupted by the Hokage's door opening slowly. She had not noticed someone coming before, but sensed the chakra of a dear friend behind the opening door. A head of dark purple hair popped in the room, pale eyes scanning it and landing on Sakura, and a small smile gracing delicate features. The former Hyuga made her way into the room, belly swollen from the precious surprise that grew inside. "Kogochi-chan said I might find you up here." Her gentle smile fell as she entered the room and closed the door. Obviously, somehow, the news of who had been spotted had reached her ears.

She silently made her way over to where Sakura sat, head hanging low suddenly and eyes cast to the floor. Once she reached her friend, she spoke, lip quivering. "Naruto-kun sent someone to tell me what was going on..." She tried to steady her voice as she spoke, closing her pale eyes and clenching her hands together. Sakura listened silently, knowing the woman would want to say more. "The last we heard of the Akatsuki, they were after those that were like Naruto-kun."

Sakura slowly nodded, reaching out a tentative hand to cover Hinata's, causing her to relax only slightly. She grasped Sakura's one hand, and placed the other over the top of her stomach, clenching her eyes shut even tighter to stop any tears that threatened to fall.

"What if they've come to take Naruto-kun away from us?" Her voice shook as she spoke. Sakura only squeezed her hand harder, unsure of how to console the woman in this moment. This thought never crossed her mind as she made her way to the Hokage tower. She could only think of the Akatsuki disrupting the village's peacefulness, her mind did not dare wonder to them taking her best friend away from her, or his new family. The thought made her heart drop into her stomach, and she too closed her eyes tightly as the woman in front of her let out a light sob. She did not let go of her hand, only holding it tighter in some attempt of comfort. Sakura dared not let her own tears fall, it had been years since the woman truly cried, but she wasn't about to start back up now, no matter how dire the situation seemed.

After a moment of silence and quite sobbing, Sakura finally opened her eyes once more and gathered to courage to speak to Hinata. "They won't take him so easily." Not sure if the words she was speaking were comforting enough, she continued on. "You know that they would have to fight off the entire village to get to him. Naruto-kun is someone that everyone in the village would miss, taking him would be just as bad as taking our Hokage, and no one will allow it." Her words might not have been the softest, but they did the job. Hinata's sobs turned to a silent whimper, and then ceased all together. The long haired woman opened her reddened eyes and gave Sakura a soft smile, squeezing her hand between both of her own.

"You're right Sakura-chan." She tried to let a small giggle escape, but choked up again as she did, tears coming out once again. "Should not think these things, but I can't help it." She placed both her own hands, and Sakura's on her swollen belly, "We need him, and I don't think we could do it without him." She moved her teary eyes from Sakura to the view of the village. "We all need Naruto-kun, i think..."

She was not wrong. Naruto was, in many ways, the center of the village. Not a single soul knew not of his name. He was the mischievous hero of this village. His constant dedication to the village and its people had become apparent over the years after his return. The fear people once held for him had faded and had been replaced with love.

Just as silence settled over the two once more, the door creaked open once again. And once again, Sakura had been too lost in thought to sense the presence. Both Kakashi and Naruto entered the room, both having the same disgruntled look on their face. It was plain to see that the meeting did not go as the planned.

Hinata's head quickly whipped around, and as soon as her pale eyes landed on her husband, she released Sakura and ran over and enveloped the man in a crushing hug. "Naruto-kun..." She sobbed out as she buried her face in the man's chest.

Sakura let out a small smile at the interaction, and she could tell that Kakashi's grumpy face had softened slightly behind his mask. The two's genuine love could not be overlooked or belittled at any

moment, even in such a situation.

Kakashi made his way over to stand behind his desk, arms behind his back as he stared over his village. Sakura slowly stood and walked to beside the man, mimicking his stance. Seeing Naruto safe was good enough for her now, and she did not wish to interrupt the couple, but she did wish to know more about the situation.

She cleared her throat before speaking to her former sensei, "From the looks on your faces, I take it you don't like the decision of the council?" A single eyebrow arched as she questioned him, eyes staying on the village scene.

The Kage narrowed his eye, and his mouth set into a grim line. "They won't let us investigate them. They're telling us to wait and see if they make a move first." Sakura stayed silent, eyes narrowing as well. That certainly didn't seem like the smartest move for the safety of the village. What if the Akatsuki's first move was to attack the village.

"What are you going to do about it?" She finally spoke after a moment of silence. She earned a shrug and Kakashi's visible eye closed. He let out a sigh before turning to look at her.

"Well, I've never exactly been one to follow the rules all that well." The corners of his mouth turned up slightly and his eye crinkled as he smiled. "I'll figure something out soon. Very soon. We can't afford to let them make the first move, the council knows that."

Sakura nodded slowly, eyes moving from Kakashi to the now unattached couple that was moving towards the two at the window. Of course Naruto spoke quickly, always one to let others know his opinion.

"Well, I think you should send me back out there to find out what those bastards are up to." He growled out slightly, earning a tight hand squeeze from a worried Hinata.

Kakashi could only sigh at the young ninja, Sakura beating him to speaking the obvious truth. "Naruto. You know they're probably after you, we would just be delivering you to them with a big red bow on top." She scoffed slightly as she ended her sentence, "Plus, Hinata-chan needs you here..." Sakura trailed off as he sent the worried woman a soft smile, who returned it and let out a small sigh. At least she knew that she wasn't the only one who strongly opposed her love.

Naruto only frowned deeply, squeezing Hinata's hand hard, actually making her wince a little. Kakashi nodded in agreement to the pinkette's statements, before his eyes lit up as he had an idea.

"Sakura-chan," Kakashi let a small smile grace his features as he turned to Sakura once more. "I think Naruto's idea isn't that horrible after all."

Sakura's heart sank as she realized the look Kakashi was giving her, and Naruto's jaw dropped as he realized as well.



"Sakura-chan," He smiled a bit more, eye closing as he did, "would you like to go on a little secret, undercover, mission for your old sensei?"

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN:\*\*

>Phew! This chapter is a bit longer than my usual chapters, i think. I apologize if its a little slow so far, and if i was focusing too much on Hinata and Naruto for a moment. But Naruto is the original protagonist, i feel its only fitting that he gets a little attention before we rip the focus from him to out cute pink haired fire ball!<br>Please review and let me know how im doing, also point out any and all mistakes i make! lol

### 3. Chapter 3

\*\*Mayo here!

><strong>Hello all, and welcome to a new chapter of Blood Stained Petals, today we will finally be getting into the meat of the plot. I really hope you all enjoy this story i am conjuring up!

>Go check out my profile for a link to a doll i did of Sakura's new outfit!<br>Inner Sakura will also be making her debut in this chapter, as i had forgotten about her before, tbh.

>Important note at the end!<br>\*\*Enjoy~!\*\*

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Chapter 3<strong>

Sakura was not new to high profile missions, she had completed her share of S-rank missions over the years, and had yet to fail one. But she was not a ninja that they would normally send out alone. However, the delicacy of her mission called for it, so it must be done. Sakura ground her teeth as she made her way back home, thinking over the briefing she had been given just hours ago.

\_"Sakura," Kakashi sighed and rubbed his temples as the pinkette fumed before him, beside an equally as upset blond. "I need someone I can trust for this," he sighed, "and Naruto, you \_know\_ that you going on this mission would be too suspicious, and dangerous."

—

\_Sakura still stood, confused and a annoyed that her sensei would suggest her for a mission of \_\_caliber. Not to mention how it went against the council's decision. Being discovered would lead to heavy punishment, and if Kakashi were discovered as the one behind this, he would be stripped of his title. \_

\_As Sakura over thought the situation, a familiar voice popped into her head, one she had thought she had lost long ago. \_\*\*"Ya! What they \_hell\_ are \_you \_thinking?!" \*\*

\_Sakura had to stop herself from widening her eyes as the voice rang through her head, \_"What in the world? I thought you were gone years ago!"

\_Sakura's inner-self scoffed, ignoring the question, and as if she were her own person, continued speaking. \_\*\*"After all the training

we've done, you don't think we could do this? You're \_crazy\_ if you don't think we can pull this off."\*\*

\_She had to admit, she had become an amazing ninja, she rivaled even Tsunade in some aspects. She had to mentally sigh at her inner's words, she had once dreamed of taking on such missions, truthfully. Her inner-self continued to rant on, and Sakura did her best to push her out of her mind once more.\_

\_"I suppose..."Sakura spoke aloud, her face melding from annoyance to thoughtfulness. "I'll think about it..."\_

\_Sakura's answer made Kakashi smile, and made her blond friend exclaim a 'what,' only to be calmed by light pats from Hinata.\_

\_"Good, good." Kakashi spoke cheerfully, "I'll need a while to get all the details in order anyways. How about you head back to work, and i'll send you the details tonight?"\_

\_Sakura bowed to Kakashi and turned to leave the room, pulling Naruto along so they could chat about the mission he had just returned from, while she walked back to the hospital.\_

Sakura's mind traveled back to the real world as she approached her apartment door, unlocking it and entering. She made her way to the couch a plopped down with a large sigh of relief. After stretching her muscles and relaxing into the couch, she noticed a note sitting on her coffee table, and reached to get it.

\_Sakura Haruno,\_

\_You have been assigned to a village on the outskirts of the Fire border for medic relief.

>Please report to my office in two days at day break to receive a full briefing, and be prepared to leave immediately.<br>I have informed the hospital of your departing and you are excused from work tomorrow to prepare for the trip.

>Pack only the essentials, and it will be important for you to not wear any clothing that could connect you back to anyone, or thing, here in Konoha.<br>Bring you headband for identification, but do not don it.

>The location of this village is in a hostile area, and you will not want any unwanted attention.<em>

Rokudaime Hokage

Sakura's eyes widened as she read the letter, "Two days?!" She exclaimed, jumping to her feet. "Why so soon?" She huffed.

Sakura's inner decided to pop back up at this time, \_\*\*"Well, because it's an important mission. We gotta get to the bottom of this as soon as possible!" \*\*\_Inner Sakura fist bumped, making Sakura physically facepalm at her mental self.

"Yeah, yeah." She waved her hand in the air, as if to fan away inner's presence.

\_"\*\*"Forger it missy! I'm here to stay this time," \*\*\_inner spoke confidently, but was ignored by Sakura.

"Well, that doesn't leave me much time to get ready..." She ran a hand through her shoulder length locks, wincing as she snagged a few kinks. "Guess I should start getting ready now."

She made her way to her bedroom, grabbing a bag and stuffing it with all her underclothes before moving to her closet. While going through her clothes, she realized he had hardly any ninja appropriate shirts that weren't red, and even fewer that didn't have her family symbol on it. She let out a heavy sigh, knowing this would mean she would have to do some shopping tomorrow.

Leaving the packing unfinished for now, the pinkette quickly went and washed up, crawling into bed immediately. It was going to be a long day tomorrow.

Sakura awoke before the sun even rose that morning, her inner self already going on and on about what all she had to do today. With a heavy sigh, the annoyed kunoichi got out of bed and got ready for the day.

After combing all of the kinks out of her hair, the pinkette decided to put it up in a loose bun, instead of having it blown about while she was out today. She donned her normal everyday wear, excluding her gloves and medic skirt, and made her way out as the sun finally rose.

\*\*\_ "We should drop by Ino-pig's and take her shopping with us."  
\_\*\* Inner finally said something that Sakura didn't find completely annoying or useless.

It had been a while since the two friends had hung out, and she would have to say farewell to her friend anyways, so Sakura nodded in agreement with her inner-self.

"That's the first good thing you've suggested all morning." Sakura spoke aloud as she left her apartment, realizing, and scolded herself mentally for talking to herself out loud. She'd have to be careful so people didn't think she was crazy, this thought earned a laugh from inner.

Sakura made her way to the Yamanaka flower shop, sure she would find Ino there bright and early. She took in all the sights of her home village as she walked, taking deep breaths to relax, and hopefully remember these places on her, inevitably long mission. Finally she reaching the shop, the sent of flowers filling her and bringing a smile to her face.

"Oi!" Sakura yelled out as she entered the shop, "Ino-pig, you in here?" She made her way past the many flower-stands to the counter where Ino sat half awake.

"Forehead." Ino lazily greeted, eyes half-lidded as she awoke. "What in the world are you doing here?"

Sakura quickly explained the cover mission to Ino, earning many sleepy, and uninterested nods from the blonde.

"So, i'll be gone for, i don't know how long, really. And i wanted to know if you wanted to go shopping with me." With the mention of

shopping, Ino perked up.

"Forehead, i thought you'd never ask!" The blonde shot up out of her seat, yelling up the stairs that connected to her parents home that she was leaving and that one of them needed to watch the store.

The girls giggled and caught up with one another as they spent hours in the market district of Konoha. Sakura picked a variety of tops out, as well as a few bottoms, and a new pair of boots.

It was already noon by the time they finished up, and decided to head out for an old favorite treat, Ramen Ichiraku.

Surprisingly enough, many of the Konoha 11 were seated at the bar. It was a delightful surprise, as Sakura would be seeing these people for the last time today for a while. It made saying her goodbye's much easier as well.

The group laughed and all caught up for a while, finally they all departed on their own ways. Sakura was now left to return home with all her new purchases.

The day ended quickly, and Sakura finished her packing and got ready for bed. That night, she had trouble falling asleep. She would certainly miss her village, but this sort of mission was an old dream of hers, and she couldn't wait.

The next morning came quickly, and Sakura got ready equally so. She had packed her new clothes from yesterday already, so she pulled out clothes from her closet.

She wore a red, sleeveless, kimono-type top, and paired it with a pair of waist high, loose, black pants, which she tucked into her new boots. Inspecting herself in the mirror, the pinkette didn't quite like how simple the outfit was, and she rummaged around through her drawers for a practical accessory. She pulled out a deep red cloth belt, situating it around her waist, and covering the top of her pants.

With one last inspection of herself, Sakura grabbed her deep mauve colored, hooded cloak and made her way to the Hokage tower.

Sakura was immediately greeted as she entered the tower, the receptionist let her know that Kakashi was waiting for her in his office.

Quickly, she made her way up, knocking lightly as she reached the door.

"Enter." Kakashi's sleepy voice rang out, and Sakura did as told.

"Good morning, Kakashi-Sensei." Sakura chirped, giving the sleepy eyed Kage a bright smile.

Kakashi scoffed at her greeting, and went straight to business. "I hope you're ready," the man gave her a serious look, earning a nod from her.

She approached his desk, looking over the map he had lain out on it.

He pointed to a location west of the village, "This is where Naruto encountered the unknown Akatsuki member. He seemed to be headed towards Rain." He slid his finger along a trade route that lead to the Rain village as he spoke.

"I had some people scout out this area yesterday for a ways, and there was nothing of suspicion for a days journey." His finger stopped on a small village on the Rain and Grass border. "Years ago, this village was known to be a meeting place for the Akatsuki, but we haven't heard any news about that for a long time." He leaned back in his chair, peering up at Sakura with his single eye. "It would make sense that they would use this location again, this is the first location i want you to scout."

Sakura nodded to Kakashi, looking over the map in front of her. Meanwhile, Kakashi grabbed a small scroll off of his desk and extended his arm to hold it out to Sakura.

"This will have all the locations i'd like you to visit." Sakura took the scroll, not bothering to open it yet, and she slid it into a pocket on the side of her pack.

"What am i supposed to do if i find something out? Return?" Sakura raised a brow in question.

"No," Kakashi shook his head, "send word, but don't leave the area. You need to stay hidden, but keep an eye on anyone suspicious."

Sakura nodded to acknowledge his words, brow creasing as she thought of how difficult it would be to hide from elite ninja's such as the Akatsuki.

"You're still in," Kakashi questioned.

"Of course." Sakura smiled to her former sensei and nodded.

"Well," Kakashi stood and sighed, making his way around his desk. He placed a hand on Sakura's shoulder before speaking again. "Good luck, Sakura... And be careful."

Sakura gave the man a reassuring smile, his fatherly side was showing, as it sometimes did. This thought made Sakura's smile grow more, and she moved in to hug the older man.

"And you don't run the village into the ground while im gone." She pulled back from the tight hug with a smirk on her face.

Her sensei just gave a weak smile as he stepped back from the girl. "I'll see you when you return, Sakura."

She gave the man another smile as the bittersweet words washed over her, jerking at her heartstrings again. She was leaving her home, alone, and it would be a lonely and hard journey. But she could do it for the village, and her friends.

"Of course, Kakashi-sensei."

With that, Sakura departed from the Hokage tower, and made her way to the border of Grass and Rain.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Well...<strong>

>I hope you all enjoyed this update!<br>I hope i can keep pushing chapters out this fast.

>Pertaining to the review i got, I want everyone to know i am trying my best to fix those problems with my writing, and i have been for a while.<br>I tried to make things more spaced out, and include more dialogue this chapter, i've always been lousy with dialogue tbh...

>I'll try to improve!<br>\*\*Here's the important part: I honestly have no clue as to who Sakura will end up with. I've created a poll on my profile for you all to vote on, so go do that.

>If its not showing up, or you're having trouble, just drop me a PM, review, or however you want to make your choice known!<strong>

End  
file.